

REEKS FILE
Genealogy File

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Ocean Springs Record

ARTIST SERIES

HARRY REEKS

By TERRY PRICE



Walking into his office you can clearly see the influence of art--in all forms. There are several pieces of sculpture that he has done, stacks of watercolors lining the walls, books of art of the world on the table, and a distinctive oil portrait leaning against the wall.

There can be no mistake--it is the office of Ocean Springs sculptor-painter Harry Reeks. And if you ask him about his art, he will talk to you in a scientific way, about molecules, and give you comparisons that you can understand.

Mr. Reeks falls under no labels of artistic categorization. He works in all forms and has even created his own unique art style. Besides painting--with water color, oils, washes, and ink--sculptoring and casting, he also works in stone cutting, welding, and graphic arts (making prints with a silk screen.)

Gnostic Art is his own word, his own creation. In relation to religion, Gnostic Art acknowledges the presence of a divine influence. This art utilizes all the known arts such as realism, impressionism, dadism, pop, op, etc., plus the eery unknown. This eery unknown, as Mr. Reeks explains it, is the experience of a negative thought put in a picture. The layman would call his works abstract.

His works can be recognized by geometric designs that strike the eye dramatically. "These are lines of force which can be compared to gravity and they create force directions," Mr. Reeks explains. All of his works utilize this principle of force.

"You never search, you find," he says in relation to his art creativity. "Art is a creative science; you keep refining and suddenly you have a new answer!"

"My work's direction is a slow process to find new methods, devices, innovations. It's a science and I enjoy the stimulation of changing the old way of doing things."

Even as a young boy he tinkered with gadgets, trying to make something spectacular. "They had no function, but today they would fall under the category of real 'IN' art."

Keeping with his theme of originality, Mr. Reeks goes after a likeness--not a carbon copy. "Since I started painting and sculptoring, I began to see and think negative-positive. Details are added, then subtracted."

He confesses, "As I've gotten older, I've demanded more and more creativity in my work. No models, no set-ups, nothing is directly copied. I reject photographs like the plague."

To do an art work, he does countless rough sketches made not to copy the subject, but as an experience to memorize it and pertinent. After it is memorized, he is uninhibited and can simplify things with his own ideas.

"Every interpretation is based on my own experiences--everything is involved," he reveals.

Every piece of his has a meaning and he has a goal for every picture. Each piece has a certain expression and concludes an idea. "I know that I have finished a picture when it communicates back to me in a strong sense."

He feels that art is totally a matter of opinion and as such he believes that a person should be able to explain his art. He uses color as an important part of his spell and you can tell his works by the vibrant colors that reflect the mood of the art.

He likes to paint people when he has a special purpose, anything connected with the water, and philosophies. He confesses that he has no interest in still life painting.

Natural skill made it easy for him to go into sculptoring, which differs from painting in that sculptoring has three dimensions. Casting in bronze is a delicate operation that he enjoys performing.

His largest works have been sculptures--like the enormous Sam Dale Monument. A magnificent 40' stainless steel monument commemorating the founding of Ocean Springs is his pet project. To be erected on the site of Ft. Maurepaus, the structure will feature a fountain and symbolic designs to depict the Frenchmen, the Church, and the Indian.

To this man art is a disease, a lifetime work. And to this man art is creativity, life in essence.

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The Clarion-Ledger JACKSON DAILY NEWS 1
Sunday, August 16, 1970 SECTION C



"HURRICANE CAMILLE" by the celebrated Gulf Coast artist-sculptor Harry D. Reeks, a 4x8 foot painting, is a memorial to the greatest storm in the nation's history. It was inspired by coast people who, standing stunned and in absolute awe among the wreckage, kept repeating over and over; "it was the hands of God." In the Bible God said, "I shall reach out my hand and consume all things from off the land." Symbolically, the artist said the lighthouse represents the knowledge of God and His teachings. The huge tidal wave reflects the saying

of the Psalmist: "All the waves and billows have gone over me." The clouds are the angels of death showing their fearsome death heads. The tornados express God's wrath and righteous indignation. The bird symbolizes the destroying of the evil. The Church of the Redeemer, with only its tower left, "sounds the alarm" with the bell. The red sky represents the supernatural aspect of the phenomenal storm. The flotsom is the "taking away of the material things." The boat is in the center, Reeks said, because he talked with the fisherman who survived the storm about their incredible experiences.



Artist Harry D. Reeks sells painting years later

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BILOXI — "Seventeen years ago I saw the 'Mysterious Hermit of Deer Island' and I have never forgotten it", said Edward Thompson, Cincinnati, Ohio Industrial Belt Corporation executive, to Harry D. Reeks, Ocean Springs artist - sculptor, who painted the Hermit from life on Deer Island.

Thompson, vacationing on the Gulf Coast with his family, purchased the portrait which the artist had kept all these years. It was shown in Biloxi in 1955 and later exhibited in the famed High Museum of Art in Atlanta in the Painting of the Year Exhibition.

Reeks said he was first introduced to the "Mysterious Hermit of Deer Island" (the name of the painting) by Captain Gorenflo, who operated a sight-seeing boat in Biloxi. One day when the Hermit rowed out to Gorenflo's boat to sing to the tourists who threw coins in his skiff, Reeks got the Hermit's consent to return with him to the island which is about a half mile off Biloxi, where he did the portrait.

"However, once we sat down, it was comfortable inside. The Hermit talked philosophically on a wide range of subjects while I worked."

THE HUT which measured only about 7 x 8 feet, was already filled with boxes and odd bundles, and then his four or five dogs crowded their hot bodies up against me; and I had the strange feeling that the dogs were actually watching and could see their master's image gradually take shape. I sensed they were showing their approval by trying to lick my face, from time to time.

"Outside was a huge pile of oyster shells. The Hermit personally tonged his favorite food from his own oyster bed which he cultivated nearby. Later, we stopped at a large live oak tree. He pointed up to a massive limb where he said he tied himself during the '47 hurricane; a monstrous wave 15 feet high washed across the island during that storm, he said. Though in his 70s, the Hermit said he and his dogs, every morning, ran the length of the beach to keep in shape."

try and now he was just patiently waiting and listening for the trumpet call from the Lord." The Hermit of Deer Island, of one of the dogs — he said died quietly about five years later.



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Postal

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gh Aug. Reeks said he was first introduced to the "Mysterious Hermit of Deer Island" (the name of the painting) by Captain Gorenflo, who operated a sight-seeing boat in Biloxi. One day when the Hermit rowed out to Gorenflo's boat to sing to the tourists who threw coins in his skiff, Reeks got the Hermit's consent to return with him to the island which is about a half mile off Biloxi, where he did the portrait.

"THAT WAS the beginning of a fascinating day with the most extraordinary individual I've ever met", the artist said. Reeks described the Hermit's hut as made up of a conglomeration of miscellaneous flotsam; pieces of wrecked boats, oil drums, old nets, tarpaulins, rags and driftwood.

"The Hermit definitely had an eye for free form," he said, "as the Hermit had enhanced the surroundings with every imaginable object that the sea might cast ashore.

"Some pieces were nailed to the trees, some were a mixture of several things which hung from ropes and twirled in the wind like a mobile, while others just lay about on the ground or were propped up against the hut. When we first walked up on this," Reeks said, "the sight was really a startling one."

"The roof of the hut was so low we had to stoop and then

"Outside was a huge pile of oyster shells. The Hermit personally tonged his favorite food from his own oyster bed which he cultivated nearby. Later, we stopped at a large live oak tree. He pointed up to a massive limb where he said he tied himself during the '47 hurricane; a monstrous wave 15 feet high washed across the island during that storm, he said. Though in his 70s, the Hermit said he and his dogs, every morning, ran the length of the beach to keep in shape.

"THE HERMIT made an impressive appearance, like a real castaway! His skin color was luminous golden brown. Bare-chested and bare-footed, he wore only ragged khaki shorts. When I was about to leave, the 'Mysterious Hermit of Deer Island' smiled as he swept his thin and bony arm across the sky and

Parade to start world series on August 16

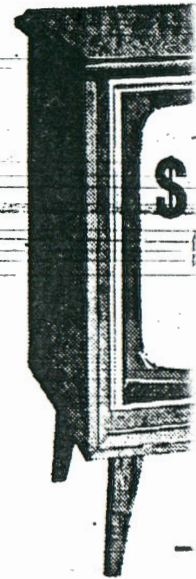
The Pas - Point Jaycees are planning a parade to mark the official opening of the 1971 Dixie Youth World Series in Pascagoula on August 16.

Jaycee president Jerry Schultz has named Bill Henry chairman of the parade scheduled for 12:30 p.m. in downtown



'Mysterious hermit of Deer Island'

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ACE

Old Mobi

\$30,000 - \$50,000 A YEAR POTENTIAL*
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INSTITUTIONS AGAINST CRIME AND FIRE
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RENT BLUE LUSTRE

12-A—Mississippi Press Register

Sunday, January 17, 1982

Fire destroys Point house

Fire Saturday morning destroyed the house owned and occupied by Nathaniel and Nita Jones at 4806 Hawkins St., Moss Point.

Artist/sculptor dies; death ruled natural

OCEAN SPRINGS — Harry Daniel Reeks, 61, 402 Maginnis St., Ocean Springs, a widely-known sculptor, painter and sketch artist, was pronounced dead on arrival at Ocean Springs Hospital at 8:25 p.m. Friday.

Coroner Benny Bryant said an inquest jury returned a verdict of death due to natural causes.

According to a local Moss Point artist, Reeks' specialty was large sculptures but he also did small sculptures and painting. He was a combat artist during World War II.

He was very generous with his time and his talents and often talked to Pascagoula-Moss Point art groups or gave demonstrations to them, the artist said.

He is survived by his wife and a daughter.

A Moss Point Fire Department spokesman said the fire started in a bathroom where a gas heater had been left on.

Units 1, 2, 5 and 7 responded to the 6:25 a.m. alarm but the flames had swept through the wood frame house so swiftly that they were unable to get control in time to save any of the structure or its contents. Capt. Charles Barnard was in charge of the firefighting until he and his men were relieved by Capt. Herbie Crook and the morning shift of firemen.

Crook said Mrs. Jones was alone in the house when the fire broke out but she escaped injury.

Firemen were told that new furniture had been placed throughout the house Friday.

Damage was estimated at \$28,000 to the house and its contents.

Lt. Nathan Pentecost suffered a finger laceration which required about nine stitches in the Singing River Hospital emergency room.

Firemen said the family was able to save only a few valuable papers from the blaze.



Deaths

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Main St. Moss Point
475-2112

C., and a sister, Mrs. Ada Culliver, Gulfport.

Friends may call from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. today in Holder-Wells Funeral Home where funeral service will be held at 10 a.m. Monday with the Rev. Fred Bueto, pastor of First Baptist Church of Moss Point, and the Rev. A. J. Pace, pastor of East Moss Point Baptist Church, officiating. Interment in Machpelah Cemetery.

Holder-Wells Funeral Home in charge of arrangements.

*A pair of scuba divers
icy Potomac River near
Florida jetliner that*

Death on f

The

MUNROE

Mrs. Helen F. Munroe, 84, 2101 Eden St., Pascagoula, died Friday, Jan. 15, 1982, in Moss Point. She was born June 11, 1897, in Saegerstown,

BROCATO

Mrs. Shirley Faye Brocato, 38, Route 3, Slater Road, Pascagoula (Helena), died Thursday, Jan. 14, 1982,

EXCLUDED. I do feel that those requesting copies of the public records should pay the cost of those records being made available to them. As I recall I voted against the last open meetings bill and my reason for voting against was it excluded this (provision) in the legislation."

Sen. Rhodes: "I have no objections to an open records law. I thought we had one. I think there should be access, but people shouldn't be disrupted in their office."

Sen. Rhodes: "That's in the Judiciary Committee and I'm not on that. We have passed ethics legislation before and I have supported it."

Sen. Mills: "I think that as far as the Ethics Commission goes, it hasn't

Chimney fire is extinguished

GAUTIER — A chimney fire at the 2601 Calle De Feliz residence of Fred Warren at 7:38 p.m. Sunday was put out by the homeowner himself before members of the Gautier Volunteer Fire Department arrived.

Fire Chief Ernie Brimacombe said Warren used a dry chemical fire extinguisher and water to extinguish the fire before three firefighting units and 10 members of the fire department arrived.

Brimacombe said the fire was caused by creosote in the chimney and he urged all homeowners who heat with wood to have their chimneys inspected and cleaned, if necessary.

—Receipt of financial records December 1981;

Following the session, the will discuss proposal for improvements to Cedar Street with representatives of the area. This had been scheduled for Jan. 10 but was postponed due to weather conditions.

Accident injures two

ESCATAWPA — Two people were treated and released at St. Joseph's Hospital Sunday night following a single-car accident on Robison Road here.

They were Merrill Orgeron, 3919 Sheffield Road and Teague, 20, of 8304 Austeria Road, Escatawpa.

Orgeron, driver of the vehicle, was working on the vehicle accelerator stuck, causing it to slide into a ditch.

They were transported to the hospital by Amserv.

Other deaths

MARTIN ANDREW JORDAN, 21, Biloxi. Service today at 2 p.m., St. Michael Catholic Church, Biloxi. Bradford O'Keefe Funeral Home, Biloxi, in charge of arrangements.

HARRY REEKS, 61, 402 Maginnis, Ocean Springs. Service today at 10 a.m., First Presbyterian Church, Biloxi. Bradford O'Keefe Funeral Home, Biloxi, in charge of arrangements.

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**ROBINSON'S FRIENDLY
FUNERAL HOME**
Lucedale — Moss Point
Fred Robinson Jr., Mortician

TURNER'S

Electrical short at Wayne Lee's

Shopping in Wayne Lee's market in Pascagoula was interrupted about 10:30 p.m. Sunday when, according to firemen, an electrical panel shorted out.

Firemen said no fire resulted from the short circuit but there was some smoke which caused store personnel to evacuate the store.

Capt. Sennett Dickens was in charge of the Lake Avenue station unit which answered the alarm.

Damage was said to be minor.

Public meetings

Monday
Ocean Springs Planning Commission, 7 p.m., city hall.

Tuesday
Jackson County School Board, 6 p.m., administrative offices, Pascagoula.

Moss Point aldermen, 7 p.m., city hall.

Ocean Springs aldermen, 7 p.m., city hall.

Pascagoula City Council, 7:30 p.m.

SAMPLE BALL

State of Mississippi
County of Jackson
Special Election

JANUARY 19, 1982

Place a cross (X) or check mark opposite your choice

FOR BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Jackson County District 1
Jackson County, Mississippi

(VOTE FOR ONE)

A. E. (Peter) Pierce

T. S. (Tommy) Smith

THOMAS

Darryl C. Thomas
WOULD LIKE TO

No Fault Divorces (Court Cost Additional)
Chapter 7 Personal Bankruptcy (Court Cost Additional)
Financial Consultation

**CHAPTER 1
CONSOLIDATION
NO ADVANCE**